

Sura Maryam

1. The first ayat of this sura is five letters of the Arabic alphabet. Can you circle these letters?

ا ب ت ث ج ح خ د ذ ر ز س ش
ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف ق ك ل م ن ه
و ي

2. Name the 12 prophets which are mentioned in this sura.

Prophet Zakariyya, Prophet Yahya, Prophet Isa, Prophet Harun, Prophet Ibrahim, Prophet Ishaq, Prophet Yaqub, Prophet Musa, Prophet Ismail, Prophet Idris, Prophet Adam, Prophet Nuh

3. Which prophet's story does this sura begin with? What is mentioned in relation to him?

Prophet Zakariyya had a son when he was of old age and his wife was barren

Where else in the Holy Quran is this mentioned?

Sura Ale Imran, ayats # 37-41
Sura Anbiya, ayats # 89-90

4. Name five of the good traits that Allah (swt) gave to Prophet Yahya. Give the ayat number(s).

Ayat #12-15 – deep understanding as a child, compassion, purity, God wariness, goodness to his parents

5. What is similar between the sign which Allah (swt) sent to Prophet Zakariyya and the instructions Allah (swt) later gave to Lady Maryam? Give the ayat numbers of each.

Suppression of speech. Prophet Zakariyya was rendered unable to speak despite being of sound mind (ayat #10) and Lady Maryam was told to take a vow of silence (ayat #26)

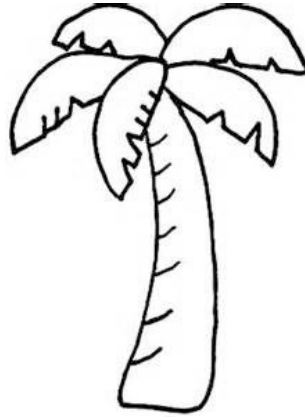
6. In this sura, the Holy Quran details more of Lady Maryam's life as discussed in Sura Ale Imran. After she has been told by the Angel Jibrael that Allah (swt) has blessed her with a son, what does it say in ayats #23-26 to suggest to us that Lady Maryam was scared? Why do you think Lady Maryam would have been scared at this point?

Lady Maryam says, "would that I have died before this and was a thing forgotten, utterly forgotten". She is alone and giving birth in the dessert, worried about what others would think of her, scared of the pains of child birth.

What did Allah (swt) tell Lady Maryam to do so as to comfort her?

Allah (swt) sent an angel to tell her that He had placed a stream beneath her, and that she should shake the date palm and fresh ripe dates would fall and for her to eat them.

Colour the palm tree below. What is the Arabic word for palm tree?



Palm tree = نخلة

- 7. Describe what happens when Lady Maryam returns among people with her new-born son, Prophet Isa. Give the ayat numbers.**

Ayats #27-30 – The people were very taken aback. Lady Maryam had taken her vow of silence and so simply gestured toward Prophet Isa. They were even more affronted at the suggestion that they should ask a baby for an explanation...but were then amazed by the miracle that Prophet Isa was able to speak! He introduces himself as a servant of Allah (swt) and a prophet.

- 8. Briefly summarise the incident with Prophet Ibrahim and his father as described in ayats #41-49 of this sura. What does this teach us in terms of how we should be with our parents when we are in disagreement with them?**

Prophet Ibrahim tried to guide his father to Allah (swt) and told him to reject the idols. His father became upset that he was offending the idols and warned him to stop before he would be forced to punish him. Prophet Ibrahim then says he will leave, as he does not intend to fight with him, and that he will pray to Allah (swt) for his father's forgiveness.

This interaction demonstrates we should speak with our parents respectfully even when we are in fundamental disagreement with them. When things started to escalate, Prophet Ibrahim said 'Peace!' as an indication that he wished to discontinue the confrontation. Similarly, we need to be mindful of the nature of the argument with our parents and we should stop when things start to get heated, and before we say something we will regret/shouldn't have. In this story, they simply agree to disagree and Prophet Ibrahim leaves as per his father's request.

- 9. This sura beautifully presents to us that we should not judge others except on the content of their character; Lady Maryam was a woman (in a society where women were seen as inferior to man) and Prophet Ibrahim sought to guide his father (in a reversal of the roles seen as a key tribal norm). Other than gender and age, what are some other examples you can think of that we intentionally/unintentionally judge people by when they advise us? Why might it be important to keep an open mind?**

We may discriminate against others because of their race or ethnicity, social class or occupation, level of education attained, wealth status, nationality or immigration status, fluency of spoken English, religion, etc.

This is dangerous in that it could potentially put us in the shoes of the Meccans who rejected Prophet Muhammad (saw) – they saw a poor and illiterate man who was advising them to reject the religion of their forefathers rather than the truth of his words!

- 10. In ayats #66-67, Allah (swt) responds to those who question the possibility of resurrection. What response does Allah (swt) give to these people? According to scholars, which incident might these verses have been revealed in response to?**

Allah (swt) created humans from nothing in the first place, so surely he can bring them to life again. According to a group of commentators, the first holy verse mentioned in the above has been revealed in response to a man who had taken a piece of rotten bone in his hand, crushed it with the hand, and then scattered it in the wind, and then said: “Look at Muhammad! He thinks that, after dying and decaying our bones, like this bone, Allah (swt) will restore us to life again. Never such a thing is possible!” (<https://www.al-islam.org/enlightening-commentary-light-holy-quran-vol-9/section-5-resurrection-certain>)

Bonus: See if you can perform the ‘observation of silence’ – which Prophet Zakariyya and Lady Maryam did – for an hour. Imagine doing this for 3 days like Prophet Zakariyya!